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CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

October 5, 2007

Monthly Newsletter

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Regional news

Region's University Professors Improve Teaching of Accounting

Over 250 university professors in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have completed courses on accounting, financial management, and auditing, organized by the USAID A/CIPA project, implemented by Pragma. The courses are intended to strengthen how professors teach these disciplines, so that students can gain quality skills that are key to economic transparency and effective market economy. Each professor received 200 hours of courses and a full set of teaching materials on all CIPA subjects. The CIPA program is a Russian-language, professionally administered accounting certification program that is based on the international accounting standards and corresponds to local business conditions. The program was created with USAID support in 2000 and has achieved substantial results in the region over the past seven years. The project also recently trained 45 specialists at the Tajikistan's Ministry of Finance and received praise from the Deputy Minister. The project hopes that such endorsement will help to increase the number of program participants in the country, which currently has one of the lowest numbers of certified accounting specialists in the region. Nearly 8,000 accountants have been certified. Over 3,000 of these specialists are from Kazakhstan.



Accounting training for the Tajikistan Ministry of Finance specialists. Photo: A/CIPA

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's Prime Minister Recognizes USAID Project

Kyrgyzstan's Prime Minister Almazbek Atambaev presented an honorary award to the USAID Business Environment improvement Project on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade for the project's support in establishing the Inspections Commission. The commission was decreed by the country's President and created by the Prime Minister in July 2007 to develop the necessary acts and additional recommendations to implement the new Inspections Law. Such step is a direct result of the USAID project's recommendations developed by the project in cooperation with the Coalition of Businesses for Fair Inspections. The composition, responsibility, and activities of the commission closely follow the project's recommendations. The commission will include the project's representative and be directly supervised by the Prime Minister. The establishment and the



Prime Minister Almazbek Atambaev (on the left) and Business Environment Improvement Project Consultant Ulan Ryskeldiev. Photo: Business Environment Improvement Project



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activities of the Inspections Commission in July received extensive press coverage and created visibility and recognition for the USAID Business Environment Improvement project in the country.

USAID and CDC Help Investigate HIV Pediatric Outbreak in Southern Kyrgyzstan

Upon the request from the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health, CDC conducted an epidemiological study on a recent HIV outbreak in the Osh Oblast with funding from USAID. The study concluded that an estimated 128 children have been infected with HIV, 28 of which have already been detected. The CDC recommendations on further steps to improve the situation in the country were integrated into the Joint Plan of Action developed by the Ministry of Health and donor agencies in response to the outbreak.

USAID and the Embassy Cooperate to Provide the Largest U.S. Humanitarian Assistance Project since Country's Independence

A handover ceremony of humanitarian medical equipment to four hospitals in Bishkek and the City Ambulance Service was held in August at the National Center of Oncology. The event marked the completion of the largest single United States humanitarian assistance project for Kyrgyzstan since its independence from the Soviet Union. The program, Operation Provide Hope, is a humanitarian medical program funded and managed by the U.S. Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. The project began in September 2004, and humanitarian assistance valued at approximately \$42.3 million has been provided to health care facilities of Kyrgyzstan. The program supports health care reforms initiated by the Ministry of Health with USAID technical assistance. USAID's contributed to the project by providing supplies and reagents to operate the donated equipment.



From left to right: the Minister of Health, the U.S. Ambassador, the Deputy Parliament Speaker, and the Minister of Labor and Social Protection at the handover ceremony. Photo: USAID

Tajikistan

Tajikistan's Minister Praises a USAID-funded Program

On September 13, the Minister of Land Reclamation and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan met with members of seven USAID-supported water user associations. The minister praised the work of the associations and expressed the Government of Tajikistan's gratitude to USAID and the USAID-funded Water Users Association Support Program for assistance to farmers. The meeting was covered on prime time news in both Tajik and Russian by the Tajik State TV station 'TVT'. The Water Users Association Support Program is implemented by Winrock International.



The minister (on the far right) at the meeting with members of water users associations. Photo: WUASP

Dairy Farms Improve Productivity with Assistance from a USAID-funded Project

The 500 dairy farmers who have received loans and technical assistance from the USAID AgFin+ project (implemented by DAI) have significantly increased their productivity and ability to compete with the milk processing companies of the Central Asian countries. On average, farmers who take \$600 loans for six months receive \$70-79 profit for the period, while farmers



that take \$1,000 one-year loans receive a \$297-315 profit for the period. The project provides all participating farmers with free veterinarian services and consultations on farm management. The project has observed that upon completion of their cooperation with AgFin+, farmers continue using veterinarian services for a fee in recognition of the added value of such services. In addition, veterinarian specialists who have cooperated with the project have created their own company and are opening a network of veterinarian centers.

A USAID-supported Tajik Film on Trafficking in Human Beings to be Shown at a Film Festival

The video film “Boz ki” will be presented at the XIV Film Festival that will take place in Minsk, Belorussia from November 17–24, 2007. The film was created with support from the USAID Trafficking in Persons Prevention Project, implemented by the International Organization for Migration. “Boz ki” tells a story of the Tajik labour migrants and the realities they face when leaving to Russia to earn their living. This film will also be shown widely in Tajikistan during a USAID-supported public-awareness campaign on human trafficking issues. Each showing will be accompanied with a discussion about human trafficking.

A Study Tour to Facilitate Key Changes in Tajikistan’s Land Legislation

Recently, the USAID Tajikistan Land Reform and Market Development Project organized a study tour for a group of Tajik government officials and parliamentarians to Australia, where, like in Tajikistan, all land is owned by the state. The tour aimed to facilitate the approval of major changes to the Land Code that the USAID project helped to prepare. If adopted, these changes would allow trading and mortgaging of land in Tajikistan. The study tour showed Tajik officials how a land and mortgage market can function in a setting of state-ownership of land, and to show a property registration system that supports such a market. The project, implemented by Chemonics, assists the Government of Tajikistan to develop market oriented land-related policies and legislation and to implement the land reform and farm restructuring process. The project provides technical assistance to the government’s Working Group on Structural and Land Reforms, set up to review and revise land reform legislation.



Assistance increased farm incomes and showed how veterinary services can improve farm productivity. Photo: AgFin+



The film will be shown country-wide during a public outreach campaign on human trafficking issues. Photo: IOM



During a discussion on land market with Australian counterparts. Photo: Chemonics



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Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan's President Publicly Recognizes USAID

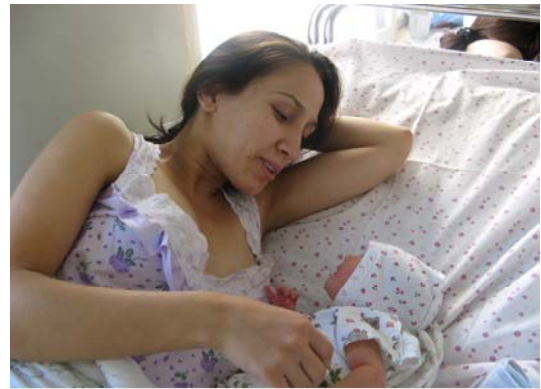
In its September 25 issue Turkmenistani newspaper "Neutrality Turkmenistan" quotes President Berdimukhammedov saying that "Turkmenistan's permanent partners in successful implementation of the State Safe Motherhood program are UNICEF, USAID/Zdrav Plus, UNFPA, UNHCR, OSCE, WHO, IOM, and other authority structures". The speech was originally delivered at the Columbian University in New York during the President's visit to the United States.

Turkmen Government Approves a Major Regulatory Document for the TB Program

In September, the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry approved the Logistic Management Information System manual - a major regulatory document for the drug management system of the TB Program that complies with the international standards. The document was developed by the USAID TB control and prevention program, implemented by Project HOPE, together with the USAID-supported Thematic Working Group on Drug Management, which includes both local and international organizations. Approval of the manual is a real step to reform the TB service of the country. It will also expedite alignment of the drug management system with international standards.

USAID Helps Open a Tuberculosis Training Center

On September 18, 2007, the Turkmen State Medical Institute's Department of Tuberculosis opened a new training center in the capital Ashgabat with support from USAID and Project HOPE. The center will help to prepare medical specialists for the implementation of the Turkmenistan National Tuberculosis Control Program, based on the Directly-Observed Tuberculosis Treatment Short-course strategy (DOTS). Project HOPE, with funding from USAID, bought training equipment, furniture, air conditioning units, and educational materials for the center. Tuberculosis control is a priority for the Government of Turkmenistan, which has called for national implementation of the DOTS strategy for Tuberculosis control by 2009. With funding from USAID, Project HOPE provides technical assistance on TB prevention and control in the cities of Ashgabat, Turkmenbashi, Mary, Balkanabat, and in the Serdar District.



The USAID ZdravPlus project is one of several USAID projects that helped to develop Turkmenistan's Safe Motherhood program. Photo: ZdravPlus



USAID's TB program provides training to medical staff, technical assistance, and medical supplies for TB laboratories. Photo: Project HOPE